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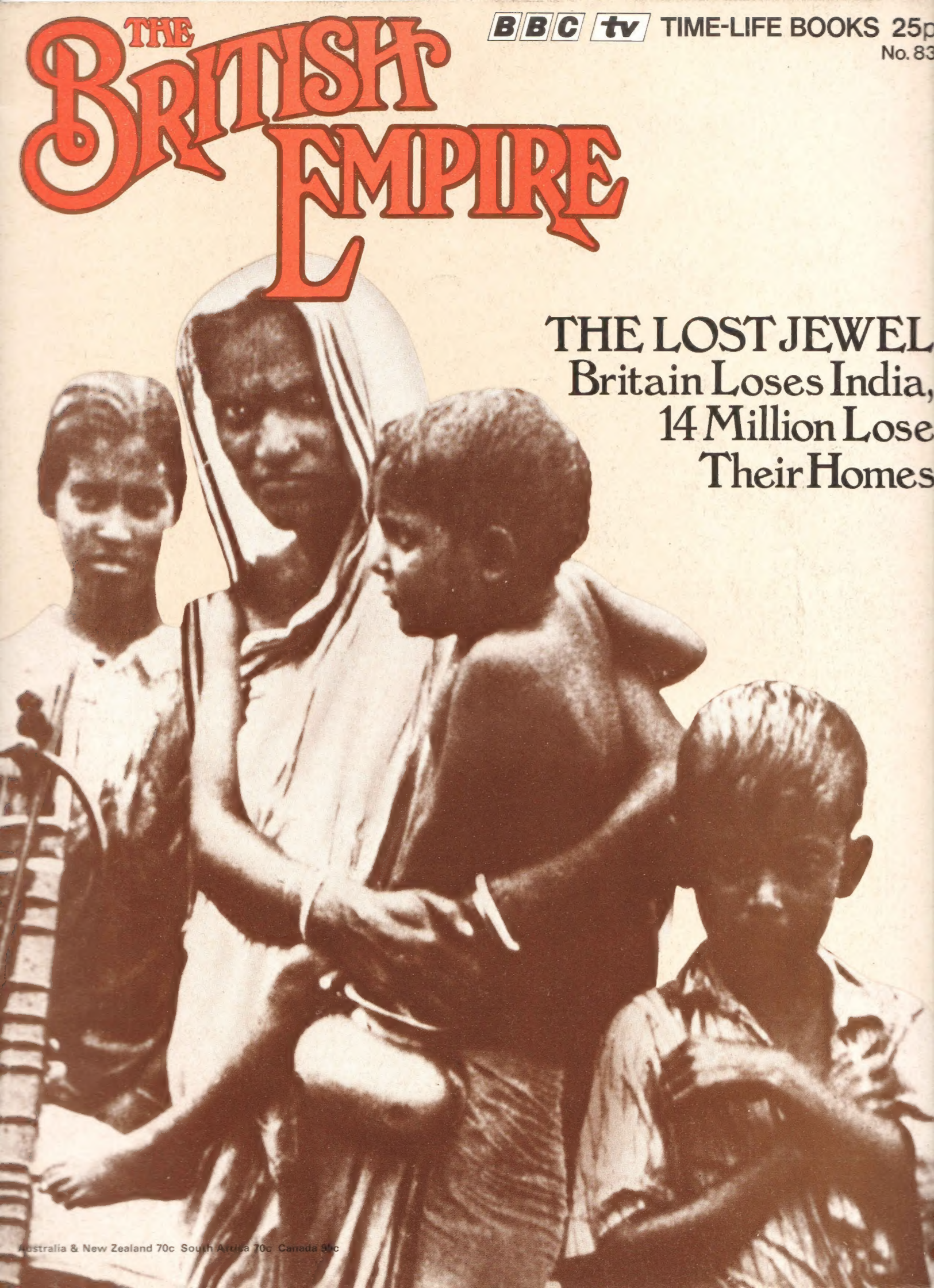

THE LOST JEWEL
Britain Loses India, 14 Million Lose Their Homes

Australia & New Zealand 70c South Africa 70c Canada 90c

THE BRITISH EMPIRE

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MICHAEL EDWARDES, the author of the text sections in this issue, is an authority on British India. His work *British India, 1772–1947* was the basis for a TV series entitled *Raj*. His other books include *A History of India*, *The Last Years of British India*, *Battles of the Indian Mutiny* and *Bound to Exile*, and his latest work is an assessment of East-West trade. He is also a well-known broadcaster on Asian affairs.

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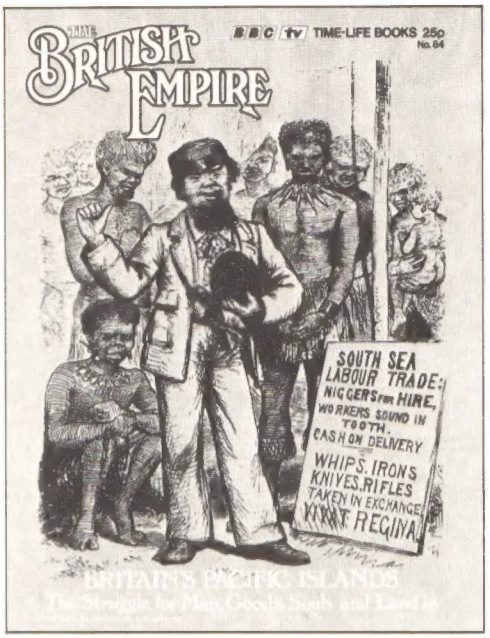

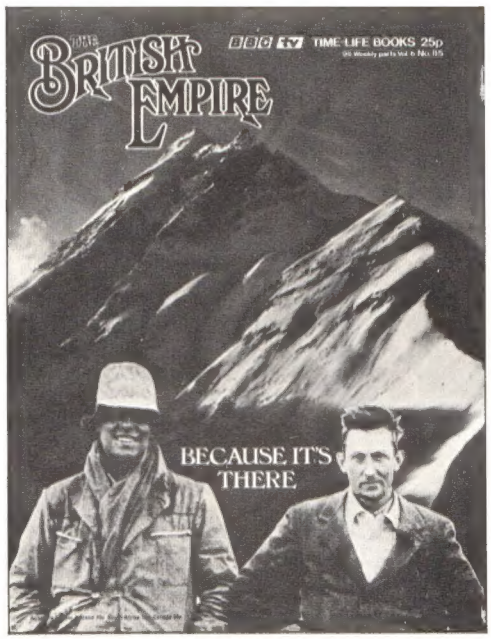

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THE LOST JEWEL

A nationalist stamp from the Second World War proclaims "Free India."

When, in 1939, Indians in their hundreds of thousands answered the imperial call to arms, many British politicians dismissed the Indian nationalists as unimportant trouble-makers and convinced themselves that, after all, the Raj would go on for ever. But the loyalty shown to Britain by India had not killed the desire for freedom: all it had done was to disguise it. Consequently, when the war ended in 1945, the floodgates opened and India became ungovernable. But when the British at last decided to hand over power as soon as they could, they were faced with a new problem – who to hand it to. For the Muslims of India were now refusing to be part of a predominantly Hindu India. The British Raj was to end, not in glory, but amid the bloodshed of a holy war.

By Michael Edwardes

On September 3, 1939, Lord Linlithgow, Viceroy of India, declared that India was at war with Nazi Germany. He did not bother to consult the leaders of the most powerful force for nationalism in India, the Congress: he considered that Indians were the King-Emperor's loyal subjects and that His Majesty's enemies were their enemies. On the surface, the Indian situation in 1939 appeared exactly as it had on the outbreak of war in 1914.

But India had changed radically since the First World War. Millions of Indians had come to feel that His Majesty rather than His Majesty's enemies was the real foe. The desire for freedom that, at first, had been the exclusive monopoly of the Western-educated middle classes had gradually seeped down through the different strata of Indian society until the demand for independence was turning into a force that threatened to shatter almost two centuries of British rule.

At first, nationalistic fervour had been channelled through the Congress which, although it was predominantly Hindu and drew its pride and strength from Hindu history, claimed nevertheless to speak for all Indians. Congress was dominated by Mahatma Gandhi, whose charisma ensured that he was its effective leader whether he was the official president, in jail or preaching self-denial and spinning cloth in remote villages. His disciple, Jawaharlal Nehru, though more practical in his approach, was no less passionate in his concern for India's freedom. An agnostic and a socialist reformer, his ideals and his zeal inspired both the landless peasants and the middle classes.

But, during the 1930s a force was growing that would eventually tear the subcontinent of India apart. In 1935 Muhammad Ali Jinnah had been persuaded to return from his London law practice, to lead those Muslims who were afraid of being dominated by Hindus. In that year Jinnah started to revitalize the moribund Muslim League party and to recruit the Muslim peasants into what had hitherto been the almost exclusive preserve of the rich Muslim landowners.

This cold, impassive man who could not even speak Urdu, the language of the peasants, planned his strategy carefully and executed it ruthlessly. Branches of the League were opened in the remotest of villages and the membership fee was reduced to a minimum. In hundreds of pamphlets, speeches and meetings, alleged atrocities of Hindu to Muslim were reported. No means was considered too bad if it could be exploited to unite the Muslims into a cohesive force.

The Second World War came, then, at a critical moment in India's history. It exposed two great questions: how much longer would Britain be able to hold on to the sub-continent and, if forced to relinquish "the brightest jewel in the British Crown," how would she leave it – united or driven by religious and political animosities into civil war?

A few weeks after Linlithgow's autocratic declaration of war, Congress met to consider its attitude. There was, indeed, overwhelming support for co-operation with the British: Nehru had hurried back from a visit to China, announcing that, in a conflict between democracy and Fascism, "our sympathies must inevitably be on the side of democracy. . . . I should like India to play her full part and throw all her resources into the struggle for a new order." Nevertheless, Congress's enthusiasm was soured by Linlithgow's high-handed disregard for its opinion.

After much deliberation Congress informed the government that it would co-operate with the British, but on certain conditions. First, Britain must give an assurance of full independence for India after the war and allow the election of a constituent assembly to frame a new constitution; second, although the Indian armed forces would remain under their British Commander-in-Chief, Indians must be included immediately in the central government and given a chance to share power and responsibility. Nothing could have demonstrated more clearly how the mood of India had changed since the outbreak of the First World War, when Congress gave its enthusiastic and unqualified support to Britain.

Lord Linlithgow, a cautious Viceroy in times of peace, became positively unbending when war was proclaimed. He could not believe that the British Raj would ever come to an end. When Congress presented him with its demands, he chose not to take them seriously.

A deadlock seemed to have been reached. "The same old game is played again," Nehru wrote bitterly to Gandhi, "the background is the same, the various epithets are the same and the actors are the same and the results must be the same." On October 23, 1939, Congress condemned the Viceroy's attitude and called upon the Congress ministries in the various provinces to resign in protest.

Before this crucial announcement, Nehru had urged Jinnah to join the protest. "Our dignity and self-respect as Indians," said Nehru, "has been insulted." Jinnah characteristically refused.

Shortly afterwards, however, he went much further than merely refusing to co-operate with Congress. At a meeting of the League in Lahore, in March, 1940, he startled not only the British and the Hindus but also those Muslims who were not part of his inner circle. Out of the blue, in a resolution which later became famous as the "Pakistan Resolution," Jinnah declared: "Muslims are a nation according to any definition of a nation, and they must have their homelands, their territory and their State." This state was to be known as Pakistan, a name dreamt up by a Muslim idealist at Cambridge during the 1930s. The "P" stood for the Punjab, "A" for Afghans (i.e. the inhabitants of the North-West Frontier Province), "K" for Kashmir and "S" for Sind. The whole meant "Land of the Pure."

The reaction from Hindus and non-League Muslims was immediate and contemptuous. Gandhi dismissed the concept of two nations with the strongest reproach he knew, calling it "an untruth." The Muslim Congress leader, Abul Kalam Azad, described it as "meaningless and absurd," while Nehru said angrily that "all the old problems . . . pale into insignificance before the latest stand taken by the Muslim League leaders at Lahore."

Jinnah's concept certainly appeared "meaningless and absurd" in 1940. Even Jinnah himself did not really think it would materialize: the vaguely worded resolution was designed far more to give Jinnah a bargaining weapon, and to give the Muslim middle classes a rallying-point. Nevertheless, because Linlithgow was so obsessed with his image of Congress as primarily anti-British, he was delighted to encourage any development which undermined the organization's

attempts to act as a united opposition to the British. Thus, in April, the Viceroy assured Jinnah that no constitution for India would be enforced by the British government without the approval and consent of the Muslims of India. The pattern of British support for any enemy of Congress was beginning to emerge.

During the summer of 1940, the war in the West burst into life. Everywhere the Allies were in retreat as the Germans swept through Europe. Now more than ever Britain needed the support of her Indian subjects, and the time seemed ripe for a settlement. A precise date for India's freedom after the war would have brought both Congress and the League into the government and they might even have evolved a pattern of mutual co-operation.

It was not to be. Linlithgow's main interest was not the formation of a united and free India: he was far more concerned with maintaining the *status quo* by playing on the fears and suspicions of the two communities of Muslim and Hindu. He did, however, go as far as recommending to London that India be conceded Dominion status a year after the war, but the implacable enemy of Indian independence, Winston Churchill, considered the suggestion far too revolutionary.

As a result, the so-called Linlithgow Offer of August 8, 1940, made its appearance. Though it stated that Dominion status for India was the objective of the British government (an offer first made in 1919) it referred to neither date nor method of accomplishment. All the Viceroy was prepared to do was to invite "representative Indians" to join his executive council and to set up a War Advisory Board. Only Jinnah got something precise. The British would not contemplate transferring power to a Congress-dominated national government, the authority of which was "denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life." By sitting tight and refusing to co-operate with Congress, Jinnah had managed to give a little more substance to the chimera of Pakistan.

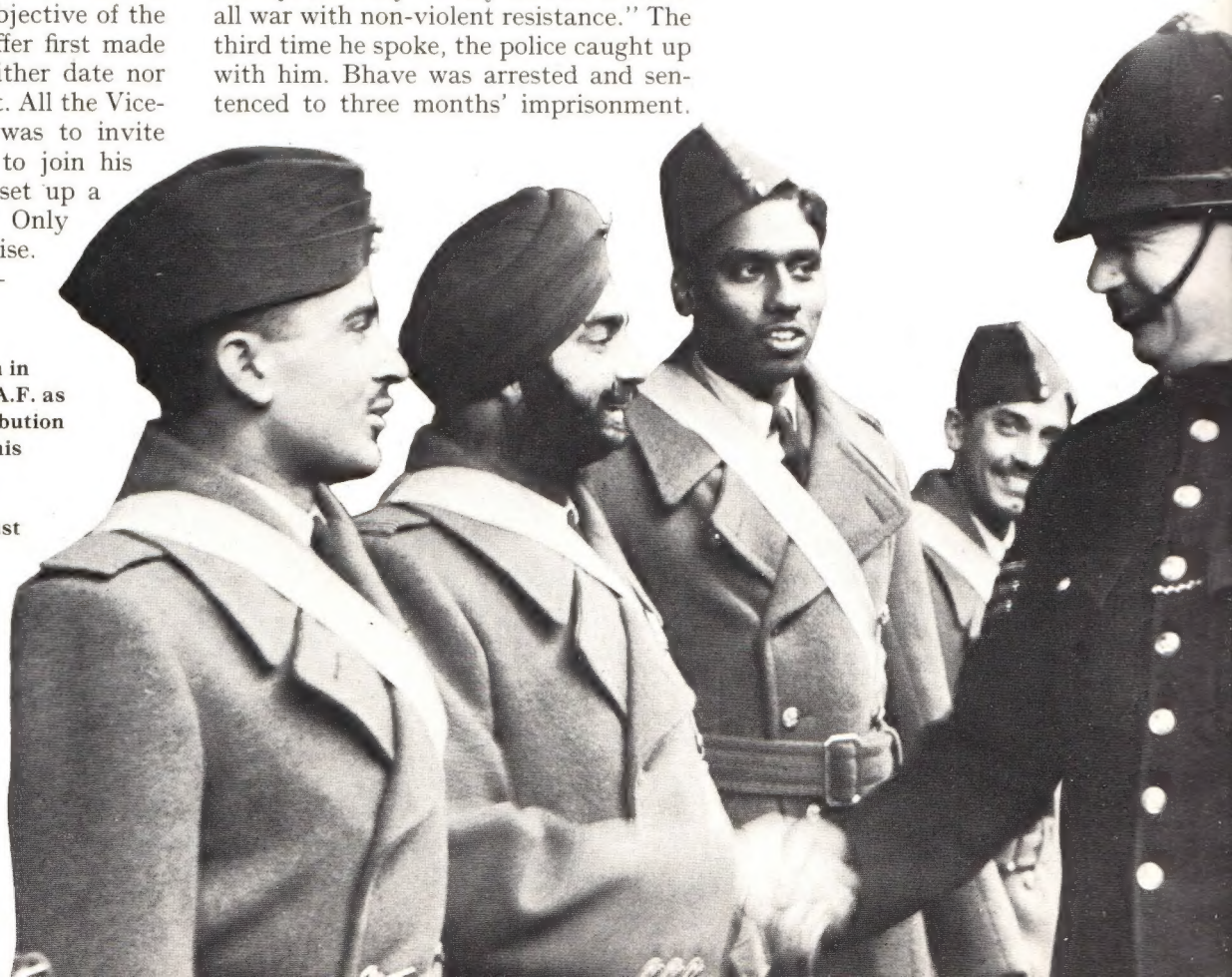
Congress reaction was predictable. The "refusal to part with power," it proclaimed, was a "direct encouragement and incitement to civil disorder and strife." As for virtually giving the Muslim League a veto on the *form* of power that might be transferred, that was creating an "insuperable barrier to India's progress."

At a meeting in September, Congress members seemed in a chastened mood. There seemed now no alternative but to rely on the Mahatma's vision and leadership. This, however, was anything but inspiring. He suggested a campaign not for independence but for freedom of speech! Instead of the mass civil disobedience of the 1920s and 1930s there was to be individual protest. It all seemed rather feeble.

The first man chosen to lead the movement, a gaunt, spare man in his early forties named Vinoba Bhave, travelled through villages making a simple statement written by Gandhi: "It is wrong to help the British war effort with men or money. The only worthy effort is to resist all war with non-violent resistance." The third time he spoke, the police caught up with him. Bhave was arrested and sentenced to three months' imprisonment. The next in line to lead the campaign was Jawaharlal Nehru. He informed the government of his intention, but was arrested before he could make his protest. This time the sentence was four years. Even Winston Churchill was offended by the severity and had to be "assured that Nehru would . . . receive specially considerate treatment." The government of India, which had censored any report of Bhave's arrest, permitted newspapers to feature Nehru's. The response was protest from all levels of informed Indian opinion, but the government remained unmoved.

Other protesters followed and all were arrested – without publicity. By August, 1941, some 13,000 had been convicted. Compared with previous campaigns, however, it was a very tame affair. The mass of the public, even if they knew about it, were not particularly interested. Attempts to persuade Gandhi to call off the campaign were ignored. It was, he said, a "moral protest," a "token of the yearning of a political organization to achieve the freedom of 350 million people." Disillusionment with Gandhi was growing and so was a feeling of utter frustration.

Even the announcement by the British Prime Minister and the American President of the Atlantic Charter, which claimed in August, 1941 that both governments respected "the right of all peoples



Indian pilots arrive in London in 1942 to fight alongside the R.A.F. as part of India's massive contribution to the Allied war effort. But this impressive display of loyalty concealed only briefly the nationalistic fervour that thrust India towards independence.

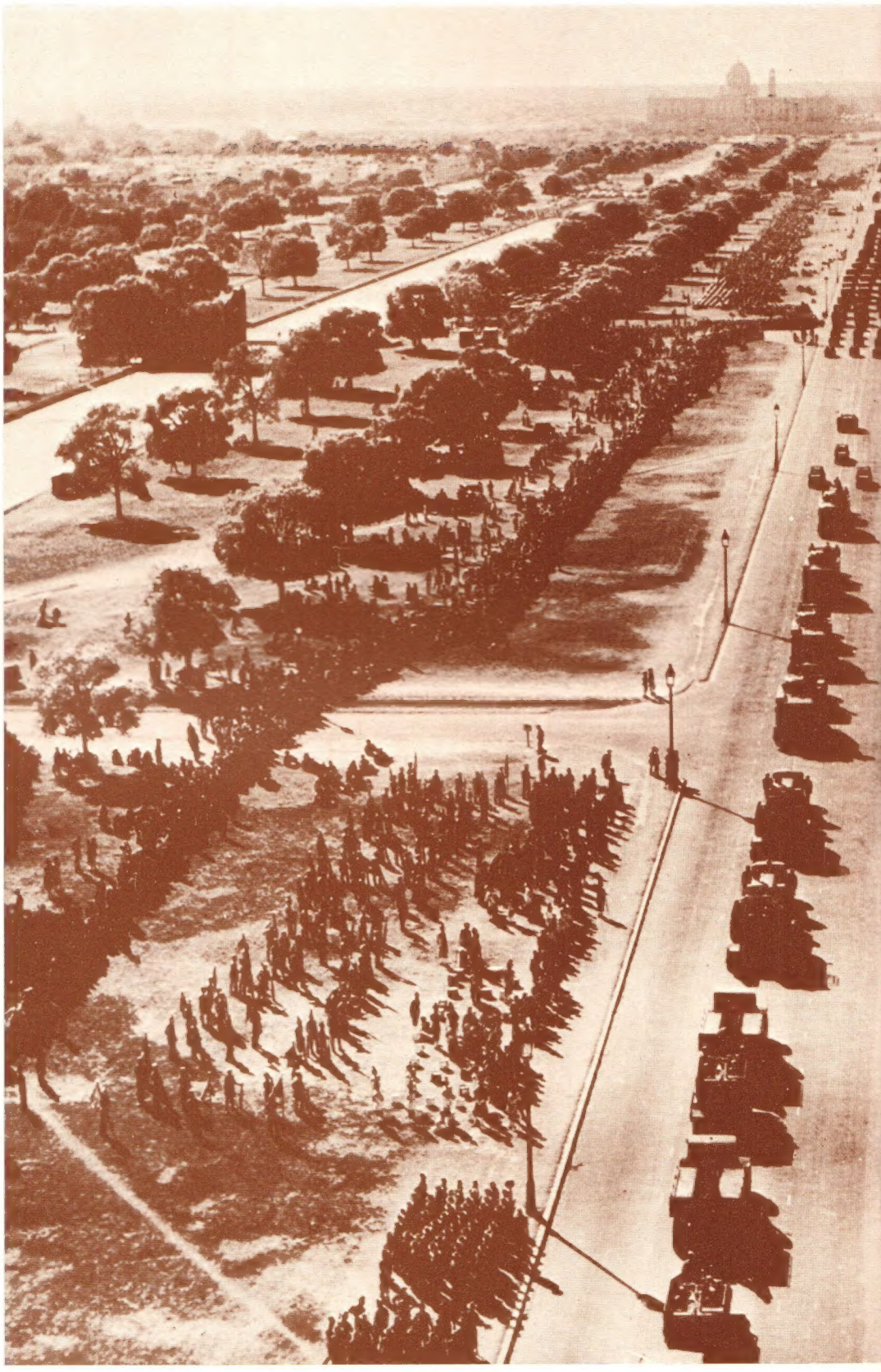
to choose the government under which they live," only raised hopes momentarily. Churchill hastened to make it clear to the British Parliament that the Charter applied only to European nations and that India was "quite a separate problem."

But a new phase in the seemingly endless struggle was about to open. On December 4, 1941, the government took the initiative and unexpectedly released all Congress prisoners, including Nehru. Three days later, equally unexpectedly, the Japanese attacked the American naval base at Pearl Harbor in the Hawaiian Islands. Panic seized Congress. At a meeting in January, 1942, Nehru came to the forefront to argue that Congress should once again offer the British co-operation in the war effort and make preparations to resist the Japanese, if necessary with guerrilla warfare.

Certainly it was beginning to look as if nothing could resist the Japanese advance and that their forces would soon be threatening India itself. It was no longer a time for non-violence, nor for its spokesman, Gandhi, and the Mahatma stood down in favour of Nehru, who certainly felt no moral objection to warfare. Gandhi's devotion to the cause of non-violence had led to his July, 1940 open letter to the British people advising them to "invite Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini to take . . . possession of your beautiful island with your many beautiful buildings. You will give all of these but neither your souls nor your minds."

When, on February 15, 1942, the Japanese occupied the supposedly impregnable bastion of Singapore, both China and America began to show anxiety about affairs in India. The Chinese leader, Chiang Kai-shek, during a goodwill visit to India, called for the "immediate transfer of real power" to the Indian people so that they could rally against the invader. The British felt compelled to make some gesture if only to satisfy their allies. Action became even more imperative after the Japanese took Rangoon in Burma on March 7. Four days later it was announced in London that a British cabinet minister, Sir Stafford Cripps, would go to India with new proposals.

Cripps, the Labour Leader of the House of Commons in the wartime coalition government, had for a long time been



deeply interested in the problem of India. Unlike Churchill and Linlithgow, who were more concerned with stretching out the length of British rule in India by any means possible, Cripps had declared to the Prime Minister as soon as he joined the government, "This Indian problem must be solved." A subtle and persuasive negotiator, convinced of the power of reason, he flew to India in March confident that he would find a solution.

As soon as he arrived he discovered that India was more deeply divided than he had imagined. Nehru, eager for a compromise, was hopeful. Gandhi was not. Jinnah seemed to think that the only real enemy was Congress. "Pakistan is our only demand," screamed the Muslim League newspaper, *Dawn*, "and, by God we will have it." Extremist Hindu parties defied the Muslims to come out into the streets and fight. Sikhs thunderously threatened everybody who wanted to divide their homelands between two countries. And there were also many who saw in the Japanese advance on India every reason not to negotiate with the British for less than they might receive from negotiations with the victorious Japanese. It was to be the extremists, not sophisticated leaders like Nehru, who were to decide the fate of the Cripps mission.

When the offer was spelt out it amounted to little more than the Viceroy's proposals of August, 1940. Churchill was not going to let India go easily. Cripps offered full Dominion status after the war, with the right to leave the Commonwealth. But the British, Cripps emphasized, would not hand power over to a government which was unacceptable to large minorities. Provinces which did not want to join the new Dominion need not. Again, the possibility of a separate Muslim state had been given official recognition. The fact that the "Pakistan option" was included at a time when there was no vociferous demand for it argues that Churchill was aiming to have the whole package rejected. Be that as it may, all parties rejected it because it stated that no constitutional demands would be granted immediately. As Gandhi was reported to have said: "Why accept a post-dated cheque on a bank that is obviously crashing?" Though the mission had failed Jinnah and the Muslim League

British and Indian troops march together in a Delhi victory parade in August, 1945. The spectacle, apparently symbolizing imperial unity, was one of the last occasions on which Indians marched beneath the Union Jack.

The Viceroy, Lord Wavell (in dark suit), visits a soup kitchen that fed a thousand people daily during the disastrous Bengal famine of 1943–44, when two million died.

were well pleased with their tactical gains.

It was deadlock again – but with a difference. Japanese aircraft were bombing Indian cities and there were rumours of invasion fleets massing off the southern coasts. Nehru's anti-British attitude did not condone Japan's aggression. He assured Roosevelt: "We, who have struggled so long for freedom and against an old aggression, would prefer to perish rather than submit to a new invader."

But while most Indians inclined to Nehru's view, the once influential nationalist leader, Subhas Chandra Bose, was assuring Indians from a radio station in Germany that "Japan has no designs on India. Japan is our ally, our helper. Co-operate with the Japanese in order to eliminate British domination and establish a new order!"

Bose, once a leading member of Congress, had always been a revolutionary. The Indian support for Britain in her hour of need disgusted Bose, who believed that India's liberation could be achieved only with outside aid. Before he could find any help, however, he first had to escape from the British jail in which he had been incarcerated since a demonstration in July, 1940. Consequently, in January, 1941, taking a leaf out of Gandhi's book of tactics, he declared that he would fast to death. The gamble came off. After resisting forcible feeding for six days, he was released under house arrest.

He slipped away on January 17, 1941, and reappeared in Berlin two months later after a hair-raising journey through Afghanistan, dodging British agents on his tail, and Russia. In Germany, he set up an Indian Legion recruited from prisoners-of-war and a propaganda unit. But he became disillusioned with the Germans when he discovered that his Legion was expected to fight in North Africa. Hitler, too, had strong reservations about Bose and his Indian fighters, regarding them as "rather a joke. There are Indians who can't kill a louse, who'd rather let themselves be eaten up. They won't kill an Englishman either."

Bose saw his opportunity when the Japanese entered the war, and in March, 1943, he arrived in Tokyo to organize the Indian National Army. This, too, was largely recruited from Indian prisoners-of-war, some whom were genuinely convinced by Bose's arguments, but many of whom were simply taking an easy route out of the Japanese prison camps. Bose continued to make eloquent appeals over the radio for Indians to cross the border and join him, but with little success. Only one combat division of some 14,000 men actually went into action.

On the other hand, despite Congress's official refusal to co-operate in the war effort, more than two million Indians had volunteered for military service in the Allied cause by 1945, the largest voluntary recruitment in history. From the first major Empire victory of the war – the conquest of Italian East Africa – to the defeat of the Japanese in Burma, when 700,000 of the million Allied troops were provided by the Indian Army – Indians were in the forefront of the fight against the Axis powers. Even the failure

of the Cripps mission in 1942 did nothing to dampen their enthusiasm or courage. But unfortunately, it was no answer to the political stalemate.

Congress was frustrated and confused. Every attempt to find a solution seemed only to push Hindus, Muslims and British even further apart. In this mood, Congress looked once again to the Mahatma for guidance. His answer was to mean the party's eclipse for the rest of the war and the subsequent enhancement of Jinnah and the Muslim League. In the famous "Quit India" resolution of July 6, 1942, Congress told the British to "purify themselves by surrendering power in India."

Even this was qualified. Only British administrators must leave; the armed forces could stay and help protect India from the Japanese. But it was obvious that Gandhi expected no response from the British. If they remained obdurate, there must be mass civil disobedience. "Even if the whole of India tells me I am wrong," he declared, "even then I will go ahead, not for India's sake alone, but for the sake of the whole world. . . . I cannot wait any longer for Indian freedom. . . . This is the last struggle of my life."

As the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee in Bombay on August 8 came to an end, Gandhi told his audience: "We shall either free India or die in the attempt." His meaning was quite clear – "This is open rebellion." He spoke with a quiet though almost frightening fury, obvious to all, not least to the police agents who were present. One of those who listened to him on that day said later that it seemed as if Gandhi was hoping for martyrdom, for his death to provoke a national uprising.

Whatever Gandhi hoped for, the government could hardly remain inactive in the face of a call for "open rebellion." Early in the morning of August 9 the whole of the Congress leadership was quietly arrested.

In reaction to the arrests, mass demonstrations took place in all the principal cities. There was no plan; the protests were spontaneous and, initially, nonviolent. Crowds of students and workers, shopkeepers and housewives, suddenly emerged out of the bazaars, singing nationalist songs and demanding the immediate release of the Congress leaders. Soon the regular police were overwhelmed. As tension grew, the Army fired upon the angry crowds. Still the violence continued and the British, believing themselves faced with the gravest threat to their rule since the Mutiny in 1857, replied harshly with mass arrests, even machine-gunning the rioting mobs from the air.

As always, violence bred violence. With the arrest of those who believed in Gandhian methods, the field was left wide open to those who did not. Trains were derailed, telephone wires cut, bombs thrown. By the middle of September, 1942, 240 railway stations had been destroyed or seriously damaged and 550 post offices attacked. The railway system was so disrupted that the Army on India's eastern frontier had difficulties with supplies. Police stations, government buildings and banks went up in flames. Indians in the government service were threatened and some murdered. In one area of Bengal, nationalists declared themselves a part of "Free India," expelled British officials and maintained their independence for four months.

The campaign was vicious but short-lived. The sympathy of the masses was a sympathy of silence and inaction. The Muslim League openly rejoiced in the arrest of Congress leaders. By the end of August, though outbreaks of violence

A lonely speaker bravely talks on in Bombay as clouds of tear gas break up one of the demonstrations that flared up all over India in 1942 during the most violent anti-British activity since the Mutiny of 1857.

were still occurring, the rebellion had been broken. The government announced at the end of November, 1942, that just over 1,000 people had been killed and about three times as many seriously injured. Almost certainly these figures were low. But there is no doubt that over 100,000 nationalists had been jailed, some for the duration of the war. The British had achieved what they had wanted all along – a quiescent India.

In fact, they gained more than that. Since the Indian middle classes actively supported the government, and the armed forces remained untouched by the events of the spring and summer of 1942, Winston Churchill could claim that the rebellion had at least made one thing clear – the "non-representative character" of Congress and "its powerlessness to throw into confusion the normal peace of India."

Considering the amount of damage that had been caused, Churchill's remarks were somewhat less than the whole truth. But it was undeniable that Congress had been crushed and nothing more was to be heard from it for nearly three years. During that time it was an illegal body, its leaders in jail, its funds and property seized, its organization virtually destroyed. Congress was to pay dearly for its "Quit India" resolution, for it set India upon the bitter road to Partition.

With Congress impotent, Jinnah set about building the Muslim League into a powerful mass party whose demands for the establishment of Pakistan would be irresistible when the time of final reckoning came. Even though the British had tended to regard Jinnah as the spokesman for Indian Muslims, he was still opposed by both Muslims in Congress and the Muslim leaders of separate parties. Yet, by 1945, the League claimed over two million active members and many more sympathizers. The British, true to their policy of helping the League at the expense of Congress, dismissed the Muslim premiers of Sind and Assam because of their anti-British and pro-Congress stances and encouraged the formation of League governments.

In April, 1943, the League captured the governments of Bengal and, a month later, that of the North-West Frontier Province. In none of these provinces had the League previously had a majority – only the arrest of Congress members and the outlawing of the organization made it possible. With all the Muslim-dominated provinces except the Punjab under Jinnah's control, the artificial concept of a separate Muslim state was turning into a reality. In December, 1943, the triumphant Jinnah asked the League to adopt as its slogan: "Divide and Quit."

Two months before, Lord Linlithgow, the longest-reigning Viceroy of all, had laid down his office to be succeeded by General Lord Wavell, who had already served for over two years as India's Commander-in-Chief. Wavell considered himself to be a simple soldier and his approach to Indian problems was straightforward and honest. Probably his biggest fault as the ruler of India at a time of endless discussion, manœuvre and argument, was his inability to talk easily. All the Indian leaders were lawyers – Gandhi, Nehru, Azad, Jinnah – members of the most loquacious profession of all.

One of Wavell's secretaries has described the Viceroy during an interview with Gandhi. "He would fiddle with his pencil and I could see his single eye gradually beginning to glaze, and at the end of it, all he could think of to say would be: 'I see. Thank you.'" However, unlike Linlithgow, Wavell believed that the end of the British Raj was in sight and was determined to bring Indians into the central government; then to work out, with their co-operation, the problems of independence.

By 1944, Jinnah's power and prestige were on the wane. A general sympathy towards the jailed Congress leaders was developing among Muslims, and much of the blame for the disastrous Bengal famine of 1943–44 during which two million died, had been laid on the shoulders of the province's Muslim League government. The numbers at Jinnah's meetings, once counted in thousands, soon numbered only a few hundreds. In despair, Jinnah had left the political scene for a stay in Kashmir.

His prestige was restored unwittingly by Gandhi. The Mahatma, who had been released from prison on medical grounds in May, 1944, met Jinnah in Bombay in September. There he offered the Muslim leader a plebiscite in the Muslim areas after the war to see whether they wanted to separate from the rest of India. Essentially, it was an acceptance of the principle of Pakistan – but not in so many words. Jinnah demanded that the exact words be said; Gandhi refused and the talks broke down.

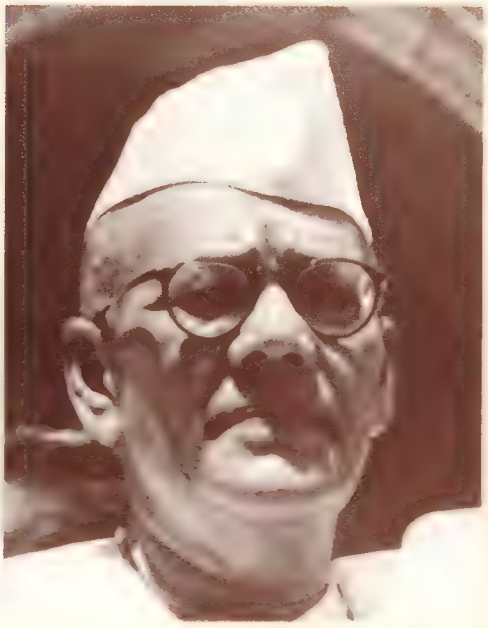
Jinnah, however, had greatly strengthened his own position and that of the League. The most influential member of Congress had been seen to negotiate with him on equal terms as the leader of all the Muslims. Other Muslim leaders, opposed both to Jinnah and to the partition of India, lost strength and the Muslim masses once again looked to Jinnah.

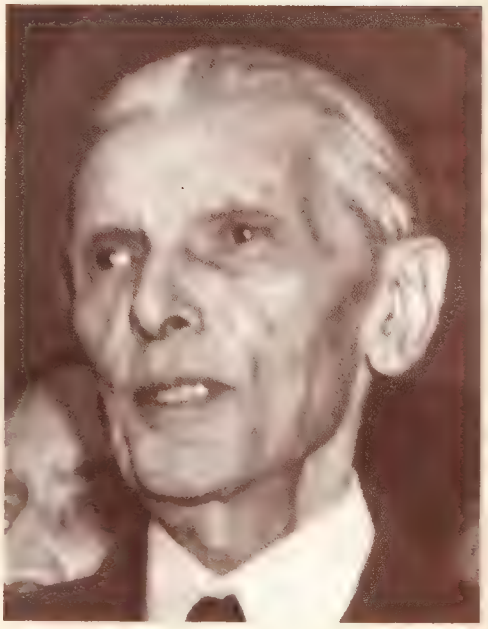
After the breakdown of the Gandhi-Jinnah talks, Wavell thought it was time for the British government to take a fresh initiative. The government agreed. With the war in Europe coming to an end and the Japanese being forced into retreat, it was essential to pave the way for a peaceful settlement of the Indian question. On June 14, 1945, exactly five weeks after the German surrender, the Viceroy broadcast new proposals and invited Indian political leaders – all those in jail had now been released – to a meeting at the hill station of Simla nine days later.

The proposals were those of 1942 with the addition that the Viceroy's council was to be immediately reconstituted to consist entirely of Indian members except for the Viceroy himself and the Commander-in-Chief. Representation on the council, however, was to be dictated by *religious*, not political criteria: there were to be equal proportions of Hindus and Muslims. Bose, still appealing from Singapore for Indians to join the I.N.A., was horrified. Suspecting that the Congress moderates and the British were about to do a deal, he launched a series of apocalyptic broadcasts urging Congress members to reject their leaders.

He need not have worried. Jinnah and the Churchill government in London made it impossible for Congress to accept the suggested formula. Jinnah insisted that the Muslim League alone had the right to nominate the Muslim members of the council; Congress, which since its inception had claimed to represent *all* Indians and not just Hindus, naturally enough would not accept this. Throughout the negotiations Jinnah was receiving discreet support from the Tories in London and at least one member of the Viceroy's staff was encouraging Jinnah to hold out. It was stalemate once again.

THE HEIRS OF GANDHI





Gandhi dominated Indian nationalism for three decades, but as the pace of nationalistic fervour quickened new men – and new ideas – took the stage. Gandhi's homespun, peaceful philosophy no longer seemed the way to achieve freedom. More direct methods were advocated by men who looked firmly to the future of their country in the modern world. Jawaharlal Nehru (left) represented the growing voice of a new, urban and industrial India. Subhas Chandra Bose (centre) called for a bloody revolution to drive out the British. And Muhammad Ali Jinnah (right), an aristocratic Muslim leader, forced the issue of religion into the limelight and almost single-handedly created both the idea and the actuality of an autonomous Muslim Pakistan.

Nehru, the Modernist

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru emerged from the ranks of Congress as the true heir of Gandhi. A Socialist and an agnostic, his patent honesty and obvious zeal fired all classes of Indian society.

His upbringing did not seem to suit him for the role of agitator against the British. From a rich, aristocratic family, he was educated at Harrow and Cambridge. "In my heart of hearts," wrote Nehru, "I rather admired the British."

He was converted to the cause of nationalism by the massacre at Amritsar in 1919, and was to spend a total of nine years in British jails before he became the first prime minister of a free India. Perhaps the most serious criticism that can be made of this inspiring leader was the way he ignored the communal tensions in India instead of coming to terms with them. For this, he must take his share of the blame for the foundation of the separate country of Pakistan.

Jawaharlal's father, Motilal, shown standing in this family group, followed his only son into the Indian National Congress.

A serious and studious boy, Nehru was more interested in English novels than games.

Wearing an Indian cap and jacket in deference to the wishes of the Mahatma, Nehru sits with his mentor, Gandhi, at a meeting of the Congress party in October, 1942.

Nehru addresses supporters from his balcony at Simla in 1945 before attending a conference with the British. Both British and Indians admired his eloquence.

At Harrow, Nehru (second row from back, fifth from right) acquired the education, manners and habits of an English gentleman.

At the 1947 Constituent Assembly, Nehru moves the historic motion to establish an independent, sovereign republic of India.

Addressing a large crowd in Bombay before the war, Bose delivers his message of hate and violence to the Indian people.

Bose, the Revolutionary

Unlike most of India's leaders, who preferred to work for independence through constitutional channels, Subhas Chandra Bose believed passionately that any method – anarchist, Fascist, Communist – was justified in the struggle to free India from the imperial yoke.

Thus, when war broke out in 1939, unlike his fellow Congress leaders, he was not troubled by divided loyalties, since it seemed obvious to him that Britain's enemies must be India's allies.

He fled from India to Germany in 1941 where he started the Free India Radio and set up an Indian Legion for Hitler. In 1943 he went to Tokyo to organize the Indian National Army that fought alongside the Japanese in Burma. But, for most Indians, the links with Britain were too strong, and only 14,000 men ever went into battle with the Japanese. Bose did not see a free India as he was killed in a plane crash in 1945.

As President of Congress in 1938, Bose smiles happily at Gandhi. Soon afterwards, Gandhi forced him to resign because he advocated the use of violence.

Bose shakes hands with Hitler in 1942 after a daring escape from India. Though the Führer recognized Bose's value as an agent of anti-British feeling, he was scathing about the fighting ability of Indians.

Jinnah, the Divider

Many men have set out to rule a state; few have created a state to rule. In his early years, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, an elegant and successful lawyer, showed few signs of future success. A member of Gandhi's Congress party, he made many speeches exhorting Hindu and Muslim to live and work together in peace.

But, by the time he returned to India in 1935 from a five-year stay in London, he was convinced that his mission was to save Indian Muslims from Hindu domination. By playing on the fears and prejudices of the Muslim masses, Jinnah ruthlessly built up the moribund Muslim League until he could justifiably claim that his party spoke for all Muslims.

In 1940 he astonished the world and, indeed, his own followers by demanding a separate Muslim country in the subcontinent. By refusing to countenance any other solution to the growing communal tensions, he was rewarded in 1947 with the new country of Pakistan.

Though Mountbatten and Jinnah look friendly enough in front of the press camera, their meetings were awkward. After the first, Mountbatten exclaimed: "My God, he was cold!"

Jinnah addresses a meeting in 1943 in his customary English. Though many of his listeners could not understand his words, the conviction behind them was apparent to all.

The creator of Pakistan sits triumphantly under his country's flag. But in one sense his was a hollow victory for even before Pakistan became a reality, Jinnah knew he was dying of cancer. He survived the foundation of his country by only a year.

II. The Last Days of the British Raj

With the inevitable failure of the Simla Conference, events moved with the rapidity of a landslide. At the British general election of July, 1945, the Conservatives under Winston Churchill were massively defeated and a Labour government under Clement Attlee took office. A month later two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki ensured the surrender of Japan. These two unconnected events were to have momentous results for the future of India.

The Labour government was committed to the cause of Indian independence. Unlike Churchill's government, which had considered Congress members to be treacherous trouble-makers, the Labour party sympathized with Congress as the representative body of national and progressive forces in India. Unfortunately, Congress leaders, newly released from British prisons, were mistrustful of any British government and inclined to believe that neither political party was sincere about giving India her freedom. "Labour or Conservative, so far as India is concerned, they are all one and the same," one Congress member on his death-bed complained to Gandhi.

Labour's first move was to declare that India would have a general election during the winter of 1945–46. As expected, Congress won nearly all the seats in the Hindu-majority provinces, and the Muslim League, though it captured outright only Bengal of the provinces Jinnah claimed for Pakistan, did much better than in the elections of 1937.

The quick end to the war with Japan weakened the government's position. It would no longer be able to negotiate from strength for, as its British conscript army left India to be demobilized, it lost the ultimate power to control events.

The blood began to flow sooner than anyone had anticipated. The Indian government decided that it could not allow members of the Indian National Army to return home without a stain on their character as it would ruin the morale of the loyal Indian forces. Consequently, it decided to court-martial the I.N.A.'s leaders for "waging war against the King-Emperor" and those officers accused of atrocities. Bose himself had been killed in an air crash while fleeing from Singapore to Tokyo in August, 1945. Congress, which had still not recognized that the League was now its real enemy and not the British, seized on the trials as a stick with which to beat the Empire. Before the trials opened Congress issued a statement claiming that "it would be a tragedy if these officers were punished for the offence of having laboured, however mistakenly, for the freedom of India."

The trials themselves proceeded in a blaze of nationalist rhetoric, which intensified when the defendants were found guilty and sentenced to transportation for life. By the time the Commander-in-Chief, General Claude Auchinleck, remitted their sentences on the grounds that it would turn them into martyrs, it was too late: his decision was claimed as a victory for the accused and their supporters.

The publicity the trials received also

had an unsettling effect on Indians in the armed forces. If Bose and his men had been on the side of right and justice, those who fought for the British must obviously be in the wrong. The logic was confused, but the tension it caused was apparent enough. Soon there were violent demonstrations, to which Nehru added fuel by speaking of the duty to rebel and of the need to get ready for "a mass battle for freedom which may come sooner than people expect."

In February, 1946, a warning was served on the British government that it would find it difficult, if not impossible, to keep the peace. When units of the Royal Indian Navy went "on strike" against low pay, bad food and racial discrimination in Bombay and other ports in February, they backed up their demands by training their guns on the city. Congress leaders belatedly recognizing the danger signs, helped to end the mutiny in Bombay after five days (after the mutineers had refused to obey their British superiors), but at Karachi the British military commander opened fire on the ships with shore artillery, causing considerable casualties and loss of life. It was becoming increasingly obvious that India was sliding into anarchy. The British government seemed to realize this for, on February 19 – the second day of the naval mutiny – the Prime Minister announced that a delegation of cabinet ministers would visit India. It was the first time in the history of the Raj that Britain had sent such a high-powered mission to India.

Before the mission left London its purpose was spelt out. It was to set up a constitution-making body and a representative Viceroy's executive council. Another statement was very cheering to Congress. "We are very mindful," Attlee declared in the House of Commons, "of the rights of minorities and minorities should be able to live free from fear. *On the other hand, we cannot allow a minority to place a veto on the advance of the majority.*" Jinnah was incensed at this snub to the Muslim League, especially as the elections had been a relative triumph for him and his party. "The issue," he commented, "is, to use a simile, 'Walk into my parlour said the spider to the fly,' and if the fly refuses it is said that a veto is being exercised and the fly is being intransigent."

In April, 1946, the Cabinet Mission arrived in India. It was headed by Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Secretary of State for India, a warm, emotional man who appealed to both Hindu and Muslim with his obvious and genuine love for India. He was accompanied by Sir Stafford Cripps whose "cold water logic" seemed to many Indians an admirable counter to Pethick-Lawrence's emotionalism. The third member of the mission was A.V. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty, a Labour party stalwart who was not much more than a passenger.

Though Cripps had announced optimistically before leaving that "the gulf between these two points of view [that of Congress and the League] is by no means unbridgeable," the mission soon discovered that it was as wide as the Indian Ocean. Congress would agree to nothing that opened the door to Pakistan; the League to nothing that would shut it against Muslim demands. It was left to Cripps, another lawyer, to produce a solution, beautifully logical, a superb exercise in academic planning – and doomed to failure. Yet for a while it looked as if both parties would accept it.

Under the Cripps plan there would be a Union of India consisting of three tiers. At the top would be a national government controlling only foreign affairs, defence and communications. All other powers would be vested in the governments of the provinces and of the Indian princely states which would be compelled to join the Union. But the provinces would be encouraged to form groupings, some of which would have a Hindu majority, others a Muslim. These subordinate unions would exercise the really effective, everyday powers. This method, Cripps thought, would nullify Muslim fears of Hindu domination.

Perhaps such a system would not have worked. But it was the best solution that had yet been devised. Indian unity would have been preserved; Muslim fears of Hindu domination would have been allayed; and, because no one was to be allowed to opt out, Congress's fears of the splintering or "Balkanization" of India, would have been removed.

But the system was given no chance to prove itself. It foundered on the composition of an interim government. The British offered six seats to Congress, five to the League and three to others. Congress, claiming to represent *all* Indians, reserved the right to nominate one Muslim. The Muslim League, claiming to represent *all* Muslims, demanded the right to nominate *all* the Muslim seats. Congress, still convinced that Jinnah was without genuine popular backing, rejected his demands.

Although the deadlock was obvious for all to see, Cripps and his colleagues left for home, claiming, incredibly, that their mission had been a success. The sole basis for such a claim was that there had been agreement on the holding of elections for a constituent assembly. The Mission had, however, achieved one more thing. It had convinced Indian leaders that the British were serious about handing over power. But this also meant that there was now no incentive for Congress and the League to search for a compromise. Since there was no longer any need to fight the British for independence, the way was clear for a fight over the inheritance.

That war was to be fought, not around the negotiating table, but in the streets; and not with the rhetoric of politicians, but with the lives of innocent people. The politicians threatened violence; other men put it into practice.

The elections for the constituent assembly took place in July, 1946 – and proved even more dramatically than before that Congress represented the majority of Hindus and the League the majority of Muslims. They also revealed that Congress held an absolute majority – 205 seats to the Muslim League's 73.

Nehru then made his astonishing declaration that Congress was "not bound by a single thing" and immediately outlined plans that went against the principles of the Cabinet Mission's proposals. The last chance for compromise had gone. Jinnah's reply was simple: "I feel we have exhausted all reason. . . . This day we bid goodbye to constitutional methods."

The League declared August 16, 1946, to be a Direct Action Day, a silent statement of protest against both the British and Congress. In most places there were only marches and the waving of black flags. But in Calcutta, seat of the League government of Bengal, demonstrations organized by the bully-boys of the chief minister, H.S.Suhrawardy, mushroomed into bloody rioting. Muslim mobs waited

continued on p. 2316

To the salute of a member of the crowd, Gandhi arrives at Simla in March, 1945, to take part in the ill-fated negotiations with the British. The talks broke down because Congress would not accept the Muslim League's claim to speak for all Muslims.

LAST CHANCE FOR UNITY

In 1945, when the Labour government swept into power, Indian independence became a certainty. One of the new government's first acts was to announce that a mission composed of three cabinet members, Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps (who had led an earlier mission in 1942), and A.V.Alexander, would visit India to seek an agreement on the constitution of a free India.

The Cabinet Mission produced a plan that might have worked had it been given a chance. Its three-tiered system of government would have safeguarded the rights of the Muslims in a united India and allowed the country to remain united.

Though both Congress and the League at first warily accepted the plan, Nehru let slip that he felt free to change it when a Hindu-dominated government was in power. After that, Jinnah would accept nothing less than a separate country of Pakistan. And the next British dignitary to visit India, Lord Mountbatten, had instructions to hand over power quickly and, if necessary, to a divided India.

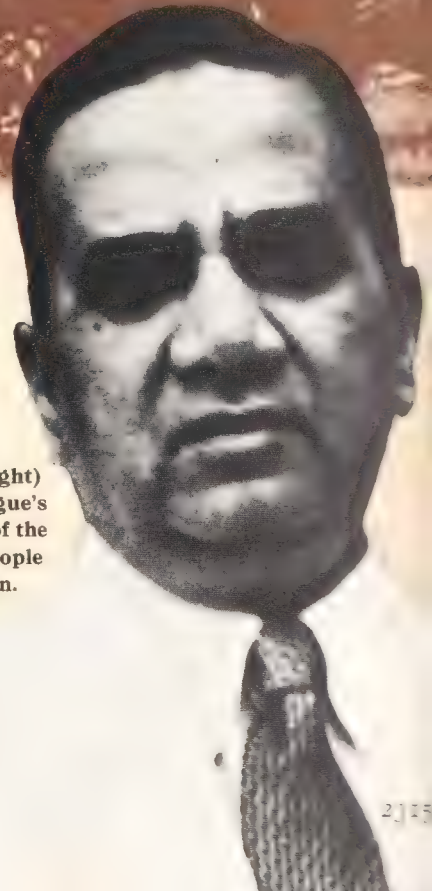
Stafford Cripps, Pethick-Lawrence, Wavell and Alexander meet to discuss their tactics before the Cabinet Mission talks of 1946.

In 1947, the Nawab of Bhopal complicated the negotiations by leading the princely states in a move to become individually independent.

Tara Singh (above) and other Sikh leaders pleaded that their sacred places in the Punjab should not be divided between India and Pakistan by the new boundary line.

By 1946 Gandhi's lifelong struggle for a united, free India was overshadowed by the growing bitterness of communal rivalry.

Nehru and Jinnah, by now rarely seen together, pose briefly during the acrimonious disputes that led to religious war.



When the Chief Minister of Bengal (right) incited the masses for the Muslim League's "Direct Action Day" after the failure of the Cabinet Mission, riots killed 5,000 people in Calcutta. Civil war had begun.

for Hindu shopkeepers to arrive at their businesses, then cold-bloodedly chopped them down and looted their shops. Hindu mobs retaliated by beating, maiming and killing Muslim old men, women and children. This great city of over 2½ million people was given over to four days of terror and death.

The British governor was not equal to the crisis, and it was not until the second day that British troops were called in. They could not prevent over 4,000 deaths and many thousands of wounded. It seemed that the civil war forecast by the politicians had begun, for the terror in Calcutta was a *civilian* terror, created by ordinary people incited to butchery and madness. No British were attacked. On the contrary, the few out on the streets received only courtesy from men whose fingers were still wet with blood.

Sobered by these terrible events, Congress leaders accepted an invitation from the Viceroy to join the interim government early in September. The League, in fear of being isolated, followed a month later But the League had no intention of co-operating with Congress. "We have come into the government," one of its leaders remarked, "with the intention of working in harmony with our colleagues – but," he added significantly, "you cannot clap with one hand."

The League's next step was to boycott the constituent assembly. Against such tactics the Viceroy was helpless. During one of the many fruitless discussions with Congress leaders even the normally placid Wavell was exasperated beyond endurance at Gandhi's tortuous statements. "This is lawyer's talk! Talk to me in plain English. I am a simple soldier and you confuse me with these legalistic arguments."

In desperation, Wavell produced "Operation Ebb-Tide," a scheme to withdraw British troops and administrators province by province, to force the Indians to co-operate with one another. Both Churchill and Attlee condemned the plan. Attlee wrote later, "I thought that was what Winston would certainly quite properly describe as an ignoble scuffle and I wouldn't look at it." On February 19, 1947, Wavell received his recall.

Next day Attlee announced that the British would leave India not later than June, 1948, and Admiral Lord Louis

One member of this family of Hindu refugees escaping from riot-torn Bengal in November, 1946, carries a shot-gun, an ugly sign of the growing communal tensions in India.

Mountbatten would replace Wavell as Viceroy to prepare a plan for the transfer of power. The last act in the drama of India's fight for freedom had begun. Four men dominated the stage, though the cast included 94 million Muslims and 295 million Hindus. There was Lord Mountbatten, cousin of the King-Emperor, his already impressive personality subtly enhanced by the aura of royalty. His reputation preceded him – a dynamic war leader, he had been the supreme commander of Allied forces in South-East Asia. Supremely self-confident, he radiated forcefulness, decisiveness, and above all, a sense of urgency. Then, in contrast, like someone from another planet, came Mahatma Gandhi: enigmatic, inconsistent in his attitude to Partition, but firmly unequivocal in his desire to bring peace and reconciliation to the riot-stricken areas, and more concerned with this than with the tortuous negotiations in Delhi.

Jawaharlal Nehru, Gandhi's successor and, as leader of Congress, the man who was to become first prime minister of India, was emotional and unpredictable, particularly when the times called for patience and understanding. And, finally there was Muhammad Ali Jinnah, in his elegant Bond Street clothes, with an inflexible will and a power to inspire loyalty almost as intense as that of Gandhi. His determination to achieve the creation of Pakistan as quickly as possible was now reinforced by the knowledge, shared possibly only by his sister and his doctors, that he was dying of cancer.

The scene in which these men met to end an Empire was dark with blood and anarchy. Time was indeed running out. The Punjab was locked in virtual civil war; Bengal, after an uneasy quiet, seemed once again on the edge of chaos. Despite Mountbatten's attempt to leave a united India behind, he was faced with the choice of Partition or collapse, Pakistan or civil war.

On June 3, 1947, after a series of misunderstandings, Mountbatten produced a plan for Partition. The British would transfer power to two new states – India and Pakistan – and the date for the hand-over would be advanced from June, 1948, to midnight on August 14, 1947. A boundary commission would mark the lines of partition. The princely states would have to make their own choice whether to accede to one or other of the new states. The provinces would, by vote in their own legislatures, determine their new allegiance.

The boundary commission was headed by Sir Cyril Radcliffe, a judge who had great experience in arbitration and the additional advantage that he had never been to India and could not be accused by anyone of bias. When he arrived in India he was told that he had only five weeks to divide a sub-continent. In addition, the four judges who had been chosen to assist him (two Hindu and two Muslim) politely informed him that they were not going to risk their careers or indeed their lives by sitting on the commission. Completely unaided, working from outdated maps, Radcliffe accomplished his task in the allotted time.

In the rush, many errors were made that were to contribute to the deaths of 600,000 people and the creation of millions of refugees. The warlike Sikhs of the Punjab, in particular, were to find their homelands and their sacred places divided between India and Pakistan. But it was not only the Sikhs who were to be involved in the butchery. After Partition, it became a common sight to find trains arriving in Pakistan packed with hundreds of dead Muslims and painted with the crude message "A present from India." Dead Hindus filled the returning trains.

One of the problems that many British and Indian officials feared would prove insuperable was that of the status of the princely states in the new countries of India and Pakistan. In spite of the fact that Mountbatten was of royal blood, he

Women and children wait patiently for a ferry to carry them away from their burnt and looted village in Bengal. The 1946 communal riots convinced most British and Indian politicians that partition was the only alternative to even worse violence.

had no sympathy for his Indian counterparts, privately calling them "a bunch of nitwits." A scheme was evolved under which accession to India would leave the states virtually independent except for external affairs, defence and communications. When they had been brought in, argued a Congress official, "we can thrash out the necessary details concerning the relationship between the centre and the states at our leisure." Mountbatten enthusiastically agreed to use his influence to persuade the princes to accept.

By the time of Partition, all except three had agreed with varying degrees of reluctance. One ruler had a heart attack immediately after signing. Two out of the three who held out were rulers of the most important states in India: the Muslim Nizam of the huge state of Hyderabad in the centre of India whose subjects were nearly all Hindus, and the Hindu Maharajah of the overwhelmingly Muslim state of Kashmir in the north. The other was the tiny coastal state of Junagadh, 240 miles south of West Pakistan, whose significance lay in its use as a pawn between India and Pakistan. The Muslim Nawab, whose chief passion was breeding his 150 dogs and who spent more money on them than on hospitals, was persuaded to join Pakistan. It was a ludicrous choice, and when India became independent, her army marched in to occupy the state to a rapturous welcome from the populace.

As a result, Pakistan was able to claim the right to do exactly the same to Kashmir, should the ruler decide to opt for India. In fact, the ruler of Kashmir, dithering over his decision, nearly caused a war between the two countries in 1947. Nineteen years later that war was fought. Even today, the problem of Kashmir remains unsolved. The fabulously wealthy Nizam of Hyderabad thought he could go it alone and, in fact, managed to survive until India occupied the territory in 1949.

But by then the long rule of the British was over. At the moment when Britain's Indian empire faded into the history books, it was left to Jawaharlal Nehru to pronounce the end of the struggle for independence: "Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially. At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom."

In Karachi, soon to be the capital of the new state of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah – who was to be the state's first Governor-General – made a less literary speech. But even its formality could not disguise the feeling of triumph. As he entered the Parliament building, Jinnah made a revealing remark to his aide-de-camp. "Do you know," he said, "I never expected to see Pakistan in my lifetime. We have to be very grateful to God for what we have achieved."

As the date for Partition approached, the British soldiers and administrators who had symbolized and maintained British supremacy in India since the first victory of Robert Clive at Plassey in 1757, began to pack their bags and return home. A few remained in the service of the new Dominions. Lord Mountbatten, the last of the Viceroys, became the first Governor-General of free India, and British generals commanded the armies of both countries.

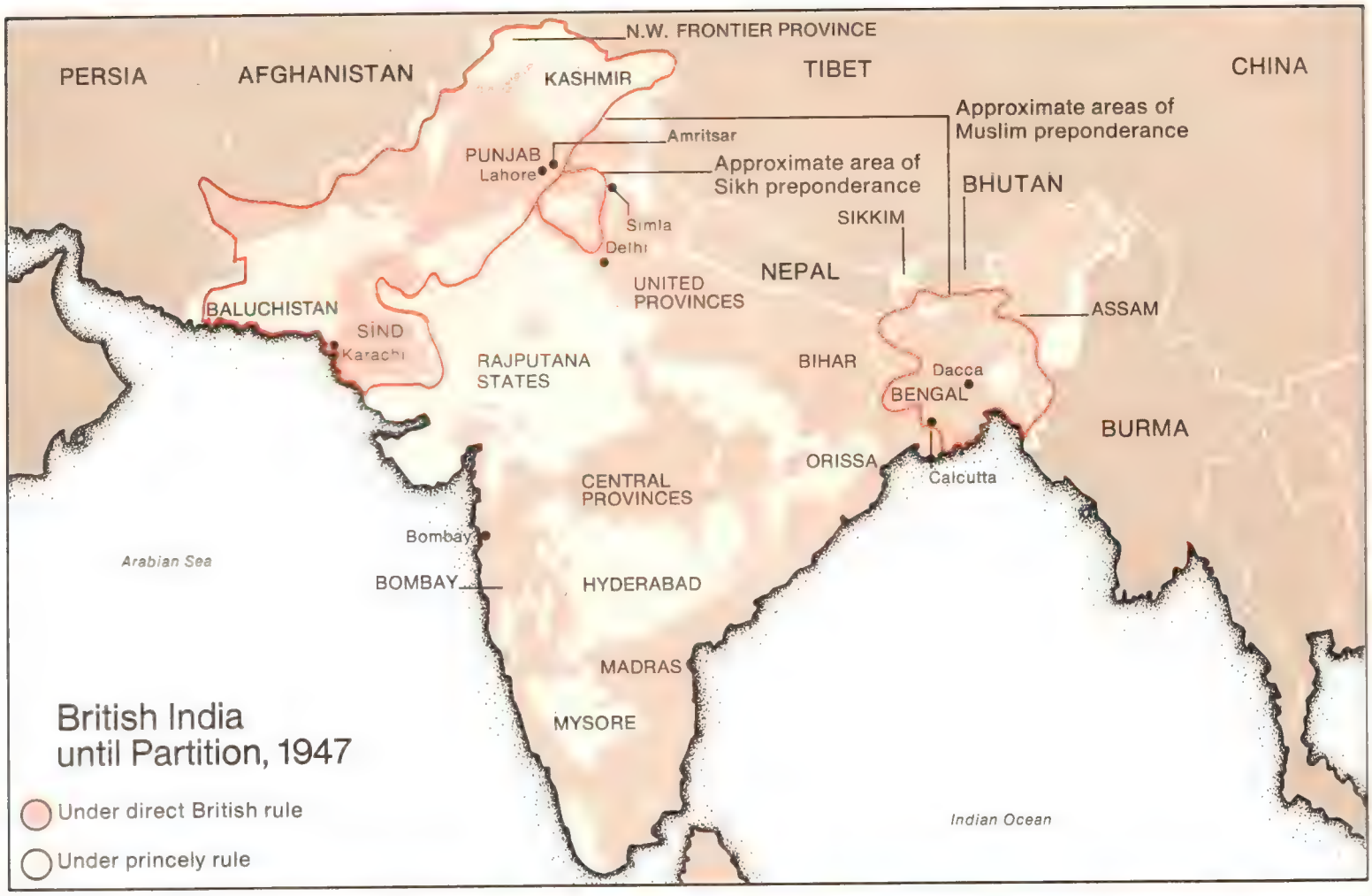
But these were personal commitments. For Britain, the "brightest jewel in the British Crown" was lost for ever. Perhaps two million British dead had left their bones in forgotten cemeteries scattered throughout India, but the rest was memory, nostalgia, and the stuff of history books yet to be written.

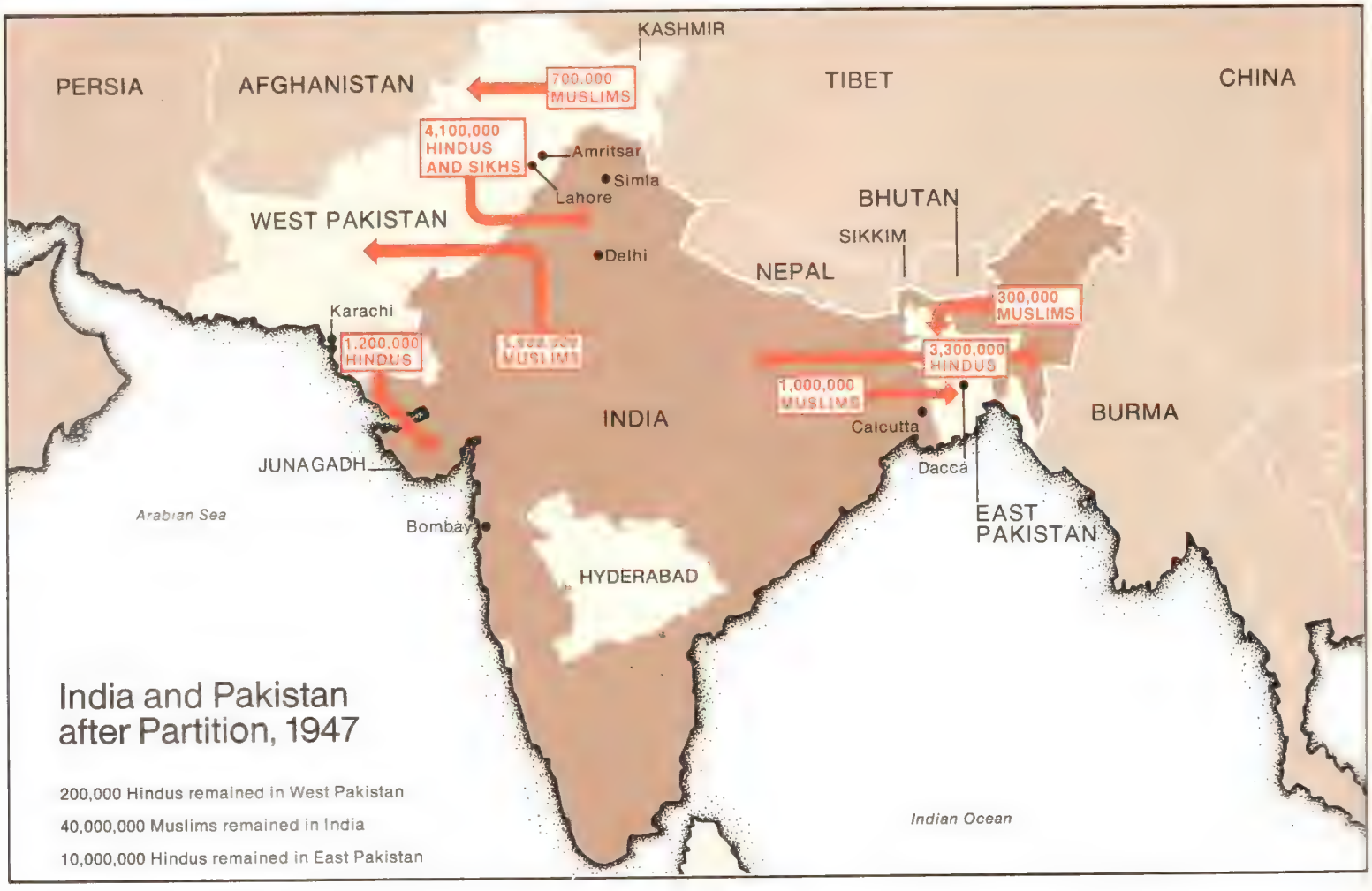
A small ceremony symbolized the historic change. In the late evening of August 13, 1947, a small party of British officers made their way to the ruins of the Residency at Lucknow, scene of the heroic defence by the British occupants against the Indian sepoys during the Mutiny of 1857. Ever since that year, a Union Jack had flown day and night from the tower. The officers watched as the flag was hauled down and carefully folded. The flagstaff and its base were then demolished by British sappers. The flag was sent to the Commander-in-Chief.

On the day of India's independence, King George VI – no longer King-Emperor – received in audience his last Secretary of State for India. The King had only one personal request. This was that the flag should be given to him to hang at Windsor alongside the other historic banners and emblems of an Empire which had now lost its cornerstone.

Lord Mountbatten, last Viceroy of the British Raj and first Governor-General of the new Dominion of India, formally hands over power in Delhi on August 15, 1947.

On August 15, 1947, the hotch-potch of the states of British India, with their populations of various and often warring religions, split into two countries, a compromise that three princes and millions of refugees would not accept.


N.W. FRONTIER PROVINCE
PERSIA
AFGHANISTAN
KASHMIR
TIBET
CHINA
Approximate areas of Muslim preponderance
Amritsar
PUNJAB
Lahore
Approximate area of Sikh preponderance
BHUTAN
SIKKIM
Simla
Delhi
NEPAL
UNITED PROVINCES
BALUCHISTAN
ASSAM
SIND
Karachi
RAJPUTANA STATES
BIHAR
Dacca
BENGAL
BURMA
ORISSA
Calcutta
CENTRAL PROVINCES
Bombay
Arabian Sea
BOMBAY
HYDERABAD
MADRAS
MYSORE
Indian Ocean
British India until Partition, 1947
Under direct British rule
Under princely rule


KASHMIR
PERSIA
AFGHANISTAN
700,000 MUSLIMS
TIBET
CHINA
4,100,000 HINDUS AND SIKHS
Amritsar
Simla
Lahore
BHUTAN
WEST PAKISTAN
SIKKIM
Delhi
NEPAL
300,000 MUSLIMS
Karachi
1,200,000 HINDUS
3,300,000 HINDUS
1,000,000 MUSLIMS
INDIA
Calcutta
BURMA
JUNAGADH
Dacca
Arabian Sea
Bombay
EAST PAKISTAN
HYDERABAD
Indian Ocean
India and Pakistan after Partition, 1947
200,000 Hindus remained in West Pakistan
40,000,000 Muslims remained in India
10,000,000 Hindus remained in East Pakistan

BLOODY BIRTH OF TWO NATIONS

Inflamed by religious hatred, rioters rampage through a Punjab city.

Once Lord Mountbatten realized that there was no way to hand over an undivided India, he took the fateful decision to cut the country in two as fast as possible, believing that there would be less bloodshed that way. Whether he was right or wrong, over 14 million Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims lost their homes and some 600,000 men, women and children were butchered by their own neighbours during the nine months of carnage that followed Partition. While Gandhi, by his mere presence in Calcutta, was acting as a "one-man boundary force" in East Pakistan, nothing could stop the slaughter in the divided Punjab. Not only were Hindus and Muslims massacring one another, but the warlike Sikhs, a different religion entirely, finding much of their lands and most of their holy places in hated Pakistan, rose up in a frenzy.

A group of Muslims on their way to Pakistan struggle past the bodies of dead and dying refugees littering this street in New Delhi, designed as India's showpiece capital.

"Freedom Must Not Stink!"

During the nine months after Partition, only the vultures prospered. An Indian pamphlet entitled *Freedom Must Not Stink!* was proved no more than a pious hope. Trains filled with rotting corpses steamed into Lahore and Delhi; the roadsides were littered with dead and dying refugees who, if they had escaped the knives of the murdering mobs, dropped out of the convoys, weakened by cholera and dysentery. Pregnant women were disembowelled; children had their brains dashed out against walls. One British commander reported: "Motoring from Beas to Lahore . . . in the course of 50 miles I saw between 400 and 600 dead. One attack on the refugees went in from thick crops while I was nearby. In a few minutes 50 men, women and children were slashed to pieces while 30 others came running back towards us with wounds streaming."

Muslim refugees cram a train bound for Pakistan as it prepares to leave New Delhi. A week earlier, 1,200 were killed when a refugee train was attacked by Sikhs.

Fortunate enough to have a lorry for transport, some Sikhs and Hindus cross into India from Pakistan. At least 14 million fled from their homes, leaving their crops unharvested. Such an enormous strain was placed on food resources and medical and policing facilities that hundreds of thousands died. It was an inauspicious beginning to the existence of two new nations.

Officer, Royal Artillery, 1860